TED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* NATO air strikes continue; Bosnian Serbs do not respond to UN demand; fate of two French pilots unconfirmed.

* Russian Ambassador expresses concern to Secretary-General over scale of air strikes and safety of Russian battalion.

* WHO says medical response to Monday's attack on Sarajevo was excellent.

* UNDP Beijing Express arrives in Chinese capital.

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United Nations authorized NATO air operations over Bosnia continued today, although inclement weather over Sarajevo was reported to be having a limiting effect on the operations. According to a United Nations Spokesman, the air strikes will continue until Sarajevo is no longer under threat.

At a press conference in Naples this morning, Admiral Leighton Smith, NATO's Commander of the Allied Forces of Southern Europe, said success of the attacks had been significant. He said more than 300 sorties were flown yesterday and 23 specific Bosnian Serb targets had been hit, including parts of the Serb integrated air defence system and installations such as ammunition depots and an underground command and control post.

The United Nations has not received a formal response to UNPF Force Commander Bernard Janvier's letter to Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic, which specified that the principal conditions which the Bosnian Serbs must fulfil for air strikes to stop is that all attacks or threat of attacks against the Sarajevo safe area cease.

According to a United Nations spokesman, the United Nations has no confirmed information on the fate of two French pilots who ejected from their plane yesterday after it was hit near Pale.

The Rapid Reaction Force yesterday fired over 500 rounds in less than 24 hours. Targets included anti-aircraft weapons from the Bosnian Serb side that were firing at NATO planes, as well as at artillery and mortar positions

(more)

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firing on UNPROFOR locations. Several UNPROFOR facilities were shelled by the Bosnian Serbs yesterday including two camps and one barrack. The entrance to the Russian battalion's main camp was blocked by a Serb tank.

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The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Ambassador Sergey Lavrov, has expressed his concern to the Secretary-General about the scale of NATO air strikes in Bosnia. In a meeting he requested yesterday, the Russian Ambassador expressed his feeling that the strikes were not in conformity with relevant Security Council resolutions. He also expressed concern about the safety of the Russian battalion, which is situated in a Bosnian-Serb controlled section of Sarajevo.

According to a United Nations Spokesman, the Secretary-General reiterated that the air strikes were authorized by the United Nations and had his full support.

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The response by the medical community to Monday's massacre in Sarajevo was excellent. That is the assessment of the World Health Organization (WHO), which says that within minutes, an effective triage system was in place, eleven operating theatres were functioning, sufficient amounts of blood were available and hospitals had transmitted their needs to the WHO. The agency and the International Committee of the Red Cross worked in close cooperation with other humanitarian organizations, such as Medecins sans Frontieres, to give needed help to the victims.

The WHO has expressed extreme concern about the continuing magnitude of war-related deaths, injuries and suffering in Sarajevo in this fourth year of war, as well as the anguish of loss, or fear of loss, experienced by many families and friends.

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After a seven-day journey across two continents, the Beijing Express has arrived in China's capital city. The train, organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), carried 200 passengers, mainly from Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The train, which departed Warsaw on 21 August, arrived in Beijing Monday night after tracing the route of the Trans-Siberian railway, crossing 5,734 miles and seven time zones. Passengers would not have been able to participate in the Beijing Conference without the backing of UNDP and its supporters. The journey included an intensive programme of workshops on issues related to the Conference.

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